

April 26, 2007

The Honorable John P. Kibbie  
President of the Senate  
State Capitol  
L O C A L

Dear President Kibbie:

I hereby transmit Senate File 277, an Act relating to the state's educational standards regarding teacher librarians and qualified guidance counselors, and to teacher and administrator quality, including the student achievement and teacher quality program and an administrator quality program, making appropriations, and providing an effective date.

I am unable to approve the designated portion of Section 49, paragraph 3. The designated portion of this paragraph requires that the state board of education shall adopt rules requiring implementation of the successful components of the pilots by school districts statewide upon completion of the career ladder planning and implementation pilots, subject to the sufficiency of funds. I am unable to approve this designated portion because I do not believe these pilot projects should automatically be mandated statewide.

The bill calls for 10 pilot projects, which I support. Eight of these projects are centered on implementing the last two parts of the career ladder system. We have already put the first two parts of this ladder into place and need to take a close look at whether implementing the rest of this system will result in improved student achievement and will help to recruit and retain the best and brightest teachers. The other two projects are to test pay-for-performance compensation methods. While I generally do not agree that pay-for-performance is the right method to improve our education system, I think it is important to test this out at the local level before we make a final decision.

While I support these pilot projects, I do not support that they be mandated statewide at the end of them. The goal of the projects is to allow us to better assess whether these methods are the right ones for this state to improve education for our students. Another goal of the projects is to allow us to assess whether these methods will attract more people to the teaching profession and make sure they want to work in Iowa. We cannot make that determination now, prior to beginning the projects, and it would be irresponsible to mandate that as a part of this bill. I look forward to working with the Legislature and other education partners throughout the state to take a close look at the models developed in these projects and make a determination about statewide implementation upon their completion. For the above reasons, I respectfully disapprove these items in accordance with Article III, Section 16 of the Constitution of the State of Iowa. All other items in Senate File 277 are hereby approved as of this date.

Sincerely,

Chester J. Culver  
Governor

cc: Secretary of State  
Chief Clerk of the House

CJC:ejh